273 when the drink excites them too much and infuriates them. In this
579 way many wounds and deaths are avoided, yet in spite of it they are frequent."

273 "The fruit which they most commonly use to make their brews
221 is the algarrobo pod, which is quite sweet and nutritious and probably the most abundant fruit in those regions. When the season for this fruit is in the offing it would seem that new life, happiness and pleasure are born, and the Indians prepare for it by putting on a show to get everyone to make ready for the coming of the happy and much sighed for season."

222 "To this effect, when the pods of the algarrobo start to turn
533 yellow they place a wooden mortar in front of their dwellings, and
789 cover it with a half tanned sheep skin or the skin of some other animal. One of them, with a piece of cord or leather thong bound about his waist from which hang a number of shells, horns and small bones, and other things which will make a little noise, starts [601] to pound with a small stick on the mortar, which they call pimpin and which takes the place of a drum. This drummer accompanies the blows dealt to the pimpin with divers body movements, half dancing but rooted to the spot, in such a manner that the objects which hang from his waist make a tambourine-like sound, something like the rattling of empty nutshells; singing meanwhile out loud but in a sad monotonous way—one would say that they fear some great calamity or are asking for help in a grim battle. The fact of the matter is that day and night, without ceasing, the low hollow sounds of the pimpin must be made, together with the rattling of the wild tambourine and the shouts or lamentations of the sorrowful singer—and all this they say is to bring about the quicker and better ripening of the desired fruit. That is why, when the singer-musician tires, another immediately replaces him.

● 342 "The houses of the Matacos are altogether too small and uncomfortable, but they make them so on purpose for they are thus able to husband time and fatigue, preferring ease in building to living comfort. They cut a couple of saplings or thin branches, bend them and stick the ends into the ground in the form of two crossed arches, tie a few handsful of straw to them and the house is finished. The entrance is low and narrow and one must enter on all fours. The appearance of the hut is that of an oven two or three yards in diameter. If the cutting of a few boughs looms difficult to them, then they cut several canes,

342 stick them into the earth in a sloppy circle, tie the ends together with any old thing, place a little straw on top and there they have a house with the appearance of an upturned funnel. And in there do
342 these privileged beings live, with more peace and tranquility than
513 kings in their sumptuous palaces; there do they build their fires and eat; there do the men and women sleep, with their parents, grandparents, children and grandchildren, and always in the company of a few dogs, on the bare ground or on a piece of reed matting, or on the skin of some wild pig they have killed, or cow they have stolen, all together in a jumble—this one with his head on his neighbor's chest, that one with his legs on some other's chest and the dogs on top of anyone who strikes them as comfortable. In this way their miserable
361 hovels soon swarm with insects and then they set fire to them and build others somewhere else—so they are forever moving into [602] new houses because those they construct are only makeshift. Furthermore they tend not to live in the same hut for long because of their habits of spending seasons now in one place now in another, according to the weather and time of year as for example: during the season of good fishing they spend weeks and months shifting continually from one section of the river to another, from the river to some stream, from the stream to some lake; in the fruit season they do the same thing."

"And so, as they are little inclined to bathing and always go
515 about dirty, and sleep piled up on each other together with their dogs,
164 they are almost always full of mange, a disease which even kills many infants. Many of them, if it should fall that they take a bath, take pleasure, while still wet, in rolling about on the river sand or in the ashes which are in their huts, as do certain animals which seem to require filth. On certain days and in certain seasons they blacken
302 their chests and faces with charcoal in order to appear more handsome or to show that they are celebrating some occasion."

"All of them cut their hair with a knife or with the teeth of fish, this for lack of scissors, which implement would have only a
[304] limited utility among them anyway. They also customarily pierce their ears, in order to insert a piece of stick or something as a fine ornament. The men pluck out with their nails the few hairs which grow on their faces, and some also pull out their eyelashes and eyebrows."

"Both men and women dress very simply, that is, they tie to
291 their waists a piece of any old thing, such as a piece of hide or cloth

skin color, and also because of the scratches which become caked, and 515
because of the sun's burning which wrinkles the almost scorched skin, especially on their shoulders; and finally because they go about barefoot and naked in the mud, through the underbrush and bushes, and as they lie down on the bare earth it is only natural that they should be covered with dust, just as we, who wash a thousand times a day do a thousand times become dirty again. They are not -- pardon the expression -- grubby, and I firmly contend that they are not dirty by nature.

An Indian camp is composed of an undetermined number of 342 ●
dwellings, made by sticking branches into the ground and tying them [361]
together on top in the form of a cupola. Onto this frame they throw quantities of straw until it looks like, not a hut, but a wagon so loaded with hay as to cover the very wheels.

They hurl the straw from quite some distance and yet so accurately as to cause wonder, so much the more as it is the women who do this work. A hut, once finished, is so strongly constructed that a man can stand and move about upon it, and it is quite waterproof.

[177] Each chief has his own group of huts, like so many barracks, and sometimes, especially on the occasion of a declaration of war, [622]
many chiefs gather.

The huts are usually so low-ceilinged that one cannot stand up inside, but they vary as to length according to the rank of the family and the number of families which live in them. The long huts are somewhat humped, with two or more doors. The entrance ways are usually protected, on the windy side of the hut, by a fixed windbreak -- one must stoop in order to be able to enter.

A hut is divided into the following parts: the kitchens and the sections where sleeping, sitting, working etc. is carried on; however, there is no material separation between these parts.

The kitchen is nothing more than a swept space on which a fire [354]
is lighted, but only when the weather is cold or when the family mother [765]
is in mourning, during which time she does not leave the hut for a year, or allow herself to be seen, nor does she speak except when strictly necessary. The usual thing is to cook food outside near the entrance. There are as many kitchens as there are families.

The bedroom consists of that portion of the hut where they 352
place skins and clothes, if they have any, upon which they lie and which they put on when they go out if it is cold. On the walls at the

table, or a guinea pig, which are excellent tidbits, though the lack of salt makes culinary success doubtful for one who has been used to it from the very baptismal font.

The Indians like a white person to be free and easy with them and to appreciate their things. So it was that I, when I was in their camps, after having gained their confidence, would go about here and there tasting their food, and they would be beside themselves with laughter while I repeated "hiss," "hiss," which means "good," "good." Of course one must eat with the fork which nature has supplied, with the exception of soup which is drunk with the shell of a clam which is very abundant in the surrounding lakes. Where I did almost jeopardize my reputation was once when I had to drink from a vile gourd with a really filthy lip. But I closed my eyes and a few moments later opened them covered with glory, and triumphant.

On that occasion, upon taking our leave, the Indians indicated that they wished to see us fire our rifles and we, to please them, fired two or three times into the air. It was something to hear the yelling of those women, and to see the tumult of boys struggling to pick up the shells. How similar is man in all stages of civilization and age.

I was forgetting to say that the width of the huts is hardly ever greater than the length of a bed.

Chapter IV

The Indian Women

Let us now for a while take up the matter of the Indian women. The Mataco women are generally rather short, but this does not keep them from being, on occasion, quite charming and well formed while they are young [179]. While living among them it is not unusual to see them naked, but in the presence of strangers they never lack a more or less protective fig leaf. On board our ship we had, for a good many days, a man and his wife. The latter wore a pair of shorts such as those we wear when we go bathing, and as she was young and well built and good looking, I can give assurance that the situation was of somewhat questionable benefit to some of our argonauts, forced anchorites as they were.

2: Karsten E-5 (1911-1913)1932 SI7 Mataco SI7
Toba SI 12
Choroti SK 6

by the whites even in their dress, but those sub-tribes who still live in a state of nature keep the body almost wholly uncovered or only wear clothes consisting of animals' skins or cotton or woollen waist-clothes and mantles of their own make, just as is the case with the Choroti. The Catholic missionary Cardús, who visited the Tobas about fifty years ago, relates that the majority of the men used to go entirely naked, only wearing a small apron of skin or stuff. When they went out hunting or to battle they wore a jacket or a breast-plate of tiger's skin. Although nowadays the Tobas commonly use articles of clothing obtained from the whites, they are still frequently seen to go almost naked, only wearing a small waist-cloth, especially when the weather is hot or when they are working. The women, according to the same writer, used to have a small apron of fox, deer, or tiger's skin tied at the waist, which reached down to the knees. The hairy side of the skin was turned inwards and the outside was painted in different colours and figures. Nowadays, as I have already mentioned, the dress of the Toba and the Mataco women in Bolivia is the *t'ipoy*, a sort of long gown or shirt made of red or some other brightly coloured stuff which covers the whole body leaving only the arms bare.

Both the Choroti and the Mataco men on certain occasions wear a kind of coarse shirt made of the fibres of the *caraguatá* plant (*Bromelia serra*). These shirts are mainly worn as a protection for the body against the thorny bushes when wandering in the forests, but also as armour in battle, since the arrows of the enemy are supposed not to penetrate these thick shirts. As a protection for the feet again the men, when hunting in the forest, sometimes wear a sort of sandal or leggings roughly made of deer or tapir hide. The head is always kept uncovered by the Chaco tribes or is only covered by ostrich plumes and the purely ornamental headgear which forms part and parcel of festive attire.

The houses of the Pilcomayo tribes are all of the same exceedingly primitive construction, or at any rate have originally been of the same type. They are round, conical, or beehive-shaped huts, constructed by a number of boughs of trees fixed in the ground in a circle and tied together at the upper ends. This erection is covered with rushes, grass, and palm-leaves down to the ground so as to form a rough thatch. A small opening is left for an entrance or door, which is so narrow that the inhabitants are obliged to enter the hut on all fours. The whole hut, varying from six to ten feet high in the centre, is too low to allow a man to stand erect, and the grass thatch so loose that the abode offers only a poor shelter

2: Karsten E-5 (1911-1913)1932 SI7 Mataco SI7
Toba SI12
Choroti SK6

M
342

against rain and wind. In these huts the Chaco Indian spends most of his time, sitting or lying on the ground or on the goat or sheep skin which forms his most important personal property. In the daytime, however, if the weather is fine, he prefers to stay outside the house engaged in various occupations or in eating or drinking, and in the summer time when no rain is falling and the temperature is high, he frequently even passes the night in the open air.

M
T
342
177

Whereas primitive huts of this type are still customary among the Pilagá and other Argentine Tobas as well as among distant Mataco tribes, the Mataco and Tobas on the Bolivian side nowadays make houses of the same form as the whites, constructed of beams or balks with walls of cane and roofs of twigs and grass. Still these houses are so badly built that it is no rare thing to see a passing whirlwind sweep off the roofs and damage the walls.

C
M
361

A Choroti or a Mataco village consists of six to twelve huts, generally arranged in a circle round an open space which serves as a field for games and as a tethering place for the small flocks of sheep and goats possessed by the Indians. In the middle of this space there is usually a shady algaroba tree under which the men of the village assemble for deliberations and where the drinking-bouts take place. In building their settlements the Indians first of all make sure of the existence of water in the neighbourhood, be it the river Pilcomayo itself or one of those insignificant pools which are found here and there in the interior of the Chaco; secondly, the place must offer the necessary pasture for their flocks; and thirdly, the Indians always settle in the vicinity of a forest where they can find plenty of the wild fruits on which they to a great extent subsist, and the trees of which offer some protection against the burning rays of the sun during the hottest hours of the day. Further, being anti-social and shy, the Indians preferably chose for their settlements a place hidden away from the main track. Seldom or never are they found close to the banks of a river: generally one has to travel one or a few miles into the interior to find their villages.

C
M
T
361

The villages of the Tobas and the Ashluslay are generally larger than those of the Choroti and the Mataco because the tribes are larger, but they are arranged on the same principles. All Chaco tribes live in village communities — this is a feature which differentiates these tribes from those of the tropical virgin forests. The vast pampas regions, of course, favour the rise of larger societies, whereas in the great virgin forests the different families necessarily live scattered.

2: Karsten E-5 (1911-1913)1932 SI7 Mataco SI7

which the strangers are believed to bring with them. The whole place, according to the idea of the Indians, has become infected as it were by the new-comers. Besides, the Indians understand that one party of white men is soon followed by another.

It is natural that the Chaco Indians should not care to bestow great labour on dwellings which in all probability will house them only for a short time, or in general, to arrange their life more comfortably in a place which they will probably soon be obliged to desert for ever. Apart from this, the Chaco Indian, who is perfectly suited to his environment, constructs his houses precisely in the way he thinks is most practical and of the material which is most easily obtainable. In the interior parts of the Chaco there are no large trees affording material for the construction of more substantial and durable houses. On the other hand, the scraggy trees and bushes in which the Chaco forests abound and the grassy plains provide building material in abundance, always within reach and excellent for the needs of the Indians. The beehive shaped huts of the primitive Chaco tribes therefore do not, as a certain ethnological school asserts, represent a type of human dwelling essentially characteristic of tribes at the lowest stages of cultural development, but must be wholly explained by the natural conditions. Like the Fuegians, who in their general culture are closely related to the Chaco-tribes, the latter are not, on the whole, any lower in the scale of human development than most other tribes in tropical or sub-tropical South America, although nature may allow these to construct habitations of a higher type.

The same reasoning evidently accounts for the fact that the Pilcomayo tribes, although they are dependent on the river and to a great extent subsist by fishing, do not use canoes or craft of any kind. Whereas »dug-outs» of the kind customary among the South American Indians are commonly used by the Lenguas and other tribes of the river Paraguay, the Choroti, Mataco, Tobas, and Ashluslay have not even thought of constructing such vessels, obviously because the large timber trees from which canoes could be dug out are not obtainable in their country.

I have mentioned that agriculture is only practised by the Chaco tribes on a very limited scale, which of course is due to the dryness of the climate. Among all tribes the land is common property, and within this territory each family has a small plot of land allotted to it, or once taken possession of, which they are supposed to possess as long as they actually cultivate it. Pumpkin, *santia* (water melon), and beans are the principal crops of the Choroti; maize and manioc are also cultivated, but the drought

2: Karsten E-5 (1911-1913)1932 SI7 Mataco SI7

342
291

A settlement of Mataco Indians. Mataco-Noctenes. Bolivia.

291
142
301

A Mataco Indian dressed in a caraguata shirt.

5: Fock E-5 (1962) 1963 SI7 Mataco SI7

this will not influence her choice and that of her parents. An abortion will be produced artificially should the man prove to be inacceptable. Should the girl prove to be pregnant at a time when she has started a new, more stable, relation, the new young man will demand that she aborts.

Thus the consummation of the marriage, the creation of a family, is, for the Mataco, identical with the commencement of a completely valid marriage. As a rule the family moves shortly after the birth to its own hut, though still near the girl's parents. Village matrilocality is permanent, and until about 40 years ago, when communal houses were still the most common, the sharing of a hut with the wife's family for a whole lifetime, was the rule.

Already in connexion with her initiation each girl is given certain advice by her mother concerning the proper behaviour as a married person. The mother will tell her, for example, that she must treat her coming in-laws as though they were her own parents and that she must always be generous when it is a matter of sharing food with them. She will also counsel the girl to show respect to her future husband, fetching fuel, for example, when he is away fishing, and ensuring that there is plenty of water for him when he returns from hunting. Willingness to cooperate and mutual respect are very typical of the relations between man and wife. The man's position in marriage is formally the same. He must regard his wife's parents as his own, must be generous to them, though in fact they do not treat him with the same indulgence they would show a son. In any conflict that may arise they side with the daughter against the husband. Should he not be sufficiently industrious he will be sent out to fish or hunt, and if unsuccessful he will be reproached, something that no Mataco would do to a son. If a man quarrels with his mother-in-law he is chased away. His happiness depends to a high degree upon an equable temperament and ability to obtain food. But as his wife will always share his bag with relations and friends, and because matrilocality prevails, the wife's family will always obtain the lion's share of what he brings back.

The position of a son-in-law as a stranger in another band also raises difficulties for him. In case of dispute his wife's family or other local people will be able to say: "We don't know him and don't trust him". Perhaps he has no kin in the village to vouch for him and give him assistance. The position of a son-in-law can thus be compared to that of a stranger in a big city, irresponsible because he is unknown, and overlooked for that reason.

The mutual relations of married couples are naturally stamped by matrilocality and the woman's very considerable occupational effort, which together give the wife a good social position in relation to her husband. In the meantime it is more through the wife's family that this status is manifested. As between the sexes the husband still dominates. As a rule it is the husband who has the say, but it is often the woman who decides what is to be said. The latent tension between family and sex results in a curiously unintegrated behaviour. By day a man and wife behave almost like strangers to each other. They are extremely terse

/319 cont./

433 They do not work, plant, or do anything similar; they
222 are but mediocre fishermen and barely hunters. To live they
241 lay up great stocks of chañar, algarrobas, and mistol fruits, and with some gourd seeds placed under the earth they have extraordinary harvests if the year is moderately rainy.

786 They organize their orgies when the algarrobas, chañar,
578 and mistol are in season, and then the quarrels and murders occur
682 among the men; these crimes go unpunished by the authorities, for there are none. But if the one who has perished had relatives they will take revenge.

342 /320/ They do not bother to build houses or such things.
513 They make a kind of oven; for it they bend some branches of small trees, fix them to the ground, cover these branches with straw or grass, and they sleep underneath in a pile in the company of their dogs.

164 This is the reason for the excessive mange which kills
515 them and makes them look so disgusting, since they are not at all partisans of the daily bath, as the Chiriguano are, and when they do bathe, they roll about in the river sand or in the ashes of their oven-houses.

584 They do not seek the consent of their parents for marriage
585 nor do they have ceremonies. Do two young persons, a man and a woman, love each other? They leave the common settlement, go to the woods, stay a few weeks, and then return, now married, to live with their in-laws or to make another oven like the one of their elders.

586 Young people divorce each other easily, but they are
152 more constant than the Chiriguano in married life. Nonetheless,
837 the women are very jealous and do not readily consent to their
593 husbands' being with other women; for this reason they keep them content with the work of bringing them much fruit from the forest and caressing them.

302 Men and women cut their hair; some of them stain their
301 faces and pierce their ear lobs, in which they put a piece of wood, like the Toba, but this is not a distinctive mark of the race.